

**O-0418**  
**CONTROL A SEARCH LINE**

**CONDITIONS**

You are a ground team leader. You have planned and organized a search line, and are preparing to begin the search.

**OBJECTIVES**

Conduct a proper search, maintaining proper direction, interval and speed, while keeping track of your position.

**TRAINING AND EVALUATION**

**Training Outline**

1. Proper control of a search line is essential to ensure proper coverage of the search area. It is the team leader's responsibility to ensure that all the terrain in the search area is searched to a given degree of thoroughness. The team leader does this by ensuring the team maintains the proper direction, interval and speed. Additionally, the team leader ensures that no terrain is missed between sweeps. Finally, the team leader must also ensure that safety of the team at all times.
2. To control the team:
  - a. Position yourself where you can best control the team. Normally this is centered on and behind the search line. Sometimes you might choose to travel in front of the search line, scouting out possible hazards. Occasionally, the you should travel along the search line to supervise all team members. Only on the smallest teams should the team leader be part of the search line. **THE TEAM LEADER IS NOT A SEARCHER.** While you should keep your eyes open, your primary duty is controlling the team, not scanning.
  - b. Normally uses whistle signals or voice commands ("Forward the Line", "Halt the Line, etc.), although radios can sometimes be used, especially on a long search line.
3. To maintain proper direction:
  - a. When navigating off a terrain feature or marked path. While you should have appointed a base man to follow the terrain feature or marked path, you must double check the base man occasionally with a map and compass. The team leader, not the base man, is ultimately responsible for the direction of the team.
  - c. If you are navigating by azimuth and distance, use your own compass to double check the base man. Periodically ask the pace man for the total distance traveled, and mark it on the map, using terrain association to see if it is correct.
4. To maintain proper interval: You should monitor you team for correct interval and make corrections as needed. As you walk the line, stand by each team member and see if you can see the number of other team members to either side specified by the interval.
5. To maintain proper speed:

a. You should look for parts of the line that are moving too quickly and slow them down. If the whole line's speed needs adjusting, adjust the speed of the base man accordingly.

b. Watch the designated route marker - he is the most likely to fall behind. Slow the team if necessary to ensure a well-marked edge.

c. Occasionally stop the team for listening checks or whistle sound sweeps.

6. To ensure no terrain is missed between sweeps:

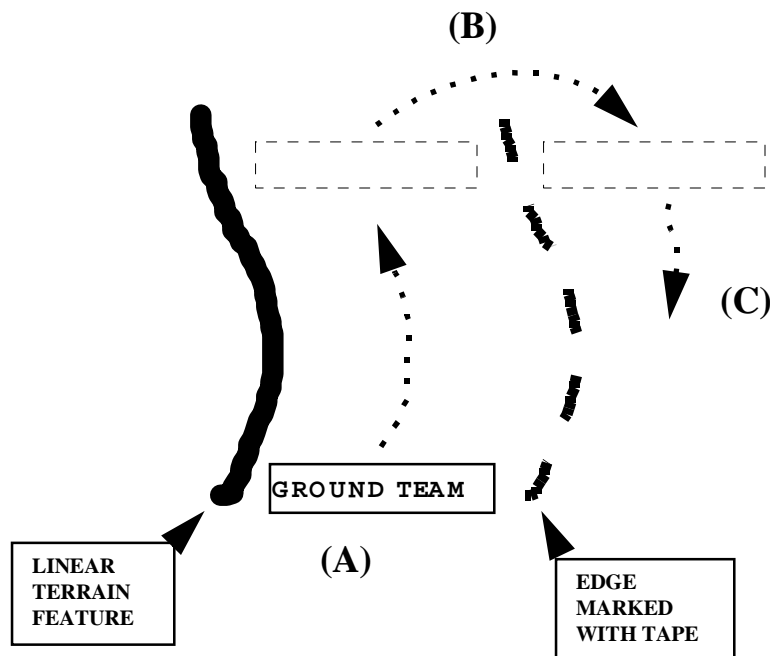
a. Make sure the team member marking the edge of the search line is marking at the proper interval (you can see each mark from the last one).

b. When you make subsequent sweeps, let the same person who marked a line be the new base man. He will have the easiest time finding the marks since he left them.

c. If you have problems finding a mark, stop the line and send out scouts to find it. Once you do, ensure you haven't missed any terrain while looking for the mark. If so, back up and cover it.

d. Periodically check your pace man's count and locate your approximate location on the map.

e. Periodically check the map, and mark the areas you have covered.



*EXAMPLE: Guiding a team with terrain association. (A) On the initial sweep, the base of the team is to the team's left, guiding on the terrain feature. The right hand member of the team marks the edge with tape. (B) When the team reaches the end of the search are it turns around. (C) On second sweep coming back, the base is to the team's right, guiding on the marking tape left from the first sweep.*

7. To ensure team safety.

- a. Occasionally have the team “Count Off” with their numbers. This ensures you haven’t lost anyone.
- b. Monitor your team for fatigue or dehydration. Take breaks as needed.
- c. If you hit dangerous terrain, stop the team, recon area, and make a safe plan to search or avoid it.
- d. Ensure all team members know they can halt the team for any reason related to the search or safety.

### **Additional Information**

More detailed information on this topic is available in Chapter 7 of the Ground Team Member and Leader Reference Text.

### **Evaluation Preparation**

**Setup:** Choose a wooded area at least 400 meters long with a linear terrain feature (stream, road, etc.). Line up a search team of at least 5 members. Predesignate a base man, pace man, and an edge marker. Provide a map of the area to the individual to be tested. Choose a magnetic azimuth through a different part of the woods.

**Brief Team Leader:** Tell the individual to take the team and search the area to one side of the linear terrain feature using a search interval of 2 men visible. Tell him to search a given distance along the feature, then turn around and search coming back one search line width farther from the terrain feature. When he completes that task, tell him to search along the magnetic azimuth for 400 meters. At some point along each search, have him stop the team and determine his position on the map +/- 100 meters.

### **Evaluation**

<u>Performance measures</u>	<u>Results</u>	
1. Maintains control of the team at all times.	P	F
2. Uses appropriate voice or whistle signals	P	F
3. Maintains proper direction and control of base and pace men.	P	F
4. Ensures proper interval among team members.	P	F
5. Maintains proper speed.	P	F
6. Ensures edge marking is adequate	P	F
7. When asked, can determine the team’s location +/- 100 meters	P	F
8. Leaves no terrain un-searched between the sweeps	P	F
9. Maintains team safety at all times.	P	F

Student must receive a pass on all performance measures to qualify in this task. If the individual fails any measure, show what was done wrong and how to do it correctly.